Nursing Professional Presence

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In order to be the best of yourself, you need to be whole mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically. To me, being human is to strive to be the best person you can become. As a human, I can adapt and change myself physically and behaviorally. I can change my thinking to assimilate and accommodate to my surrounding environment. Every day, there are challenges within my life that force me to change so that I could become a better version of myself. By being the best person that I can become, I hope to reflect self-awareness in my professional presence as a nurse.

**Models of Health and Healing**

The profession of nursing has changed over the years to adapt to the changing culture and environment. There are two models of health and healing that can relate on what it means being a nurse and being human. These two models of health are Era 1 and Era 2. Era 1, also known as, the Mechanical Model, occurred around 1860s. It was during this era that the focus on healing is on the physical body. Health and wellness are dependent on the physical body. Treatment to illness is solely related to treating the physical body. In order to heal, treatments are focused on physical interventions. Around the 1950s, Era 2, also known as Body/Mind Model, occurred. Era 2 is very different from Era 1 in that Era 2 proposed that healing is dependent on the body and the mind. It is in this era that the mind and body is connected and treatment should be concerned with healing the physical body as well as the mind (Koerner, 2011).

**Models and Professional Presence**

During Era 1, the focus of treatment is on the physical body. This is very different from my professional practice as a nurse today. For example, if I was a nurse practicing during Era 1 and I see a patient that has an infected wound on his leg, my focus would be to clean the wound and bandage it up for him. If this patient were my patient today, I would still clean his wound and bandage it up, however, my nursing interventions would be more than just treating the physical ailment. I would assess how and when this patient received the wound, why he waited until the wound is infected to get treatment, and what he has done to treat the wound at home. I need to see the whole picture. I want to know how this leg wound has affected him physically, emotionally, and mentally so that I could provide him with the most appropriate nursing care plan.

**Influence on Nursing Practice**

Nurses faces different challenges every day at work. These challenges can bring about stress and anxiety for nurses. Nurses must maintain a professional presence even under high stress situations. To me, a nurse that has a strong professional presence will have qualities that can facilitate a bond of trust and rapport with her patients. These qualities may include confidence, integrity, educated, calming, and mindful. To be mindful, she must show her patients that she is there with them 100% and that her focus is their well-being. I remember a time when I am very mindful of my patient’s needs. I had a patient that was in a lot of pain. Her pain was noticeable on her face and body. Her vitals also reflected her state of elevated pain. I sat down with the patient and planned out how we will manage her pain throughout the day together. I informed her that I will alternate her IV and oral pain medications so that her pain is well managed. I informed the patient how often I will be coming to give her the pain medications as ordered by her physician. The patient was very appreciative of the plan that we have decided together. Throughout the day, I would check up with her and assess her pain level. By the end of my shift that day, my patient stated that that day was the first day she was able to rest without feeling pain. My mindfulness of my patients needs has helped me become a more attentive nurse and help my patient gain relief from pain.

**Personality Preferences**

**Personality Assessment Submission**

I have taken the Jung personality test. My personality is categorized as ISFJ personality type (Jung, n.d.). Please see the attached result.

**Test Results Analysis and Preference Alignment**

ISFJ stands for Introverted, Sensing, Feeling, and Judging. Some keywords that summarizes the ISFJ personality include: responsible, traditional, reliable, helpful, and dutiful (Neris Analytics Limited, 2011-2018). For the most part, I feel that this personality test accurately describes me as a person. These characteristics are prevalent in the life decisions I have made in my relationships, career, and personal interests. I have chosen personal relationships where my ethnic sense of traditions can be appreciated by tending towards those with similar backgrounds and enjoys the same activities as me. This is evident with the choice of my personal friends and my husband. I find that I also seek stability in relationships in my life. I take commitment seriously and find that having a committed relationship in my life helps keep me stable mentally, physically, and emotionally. I feel my career choice as a nurse exhibits my desire to be helpful to my fellow human by dutifully serving them in their time of need while knowing that I share responsibility in their well-being. As a nurse I can help others while being financially stable. In my personal life, I enjoy ethnic activities and food that remind me of my family, culture, and traditions. This shows in the traditional foods I cook, the activities that I do with my family when observing Tet and Harvest Moon festival, as well as other Vietnamese holidays. Being an introvert, I enjoy quietly celebrating the moon festival with eating moon cakes and drinking tea while watching the full moon outside in the late autumn night sky. I feel it is my responsibility to keep these traditions for future generations of my family.

As stated above, one description of ISFJ is patient (16personalities, n.d.). As much as I wish that I would always exhibit this characteristic, I do not feel as strongly aligned with this description. There have been times where I have lost my patience, especially as a nurse, in certain high stress situations. I do remember times where colleagues were not proficient in their jobs and tasks which in turn affected my performance and caused me to lose my patience. Perhaps this may have been due to the immediacy of the situation, however, in retrospect, I feel I could have made more efforts to see my colleague’s perspective and possible inexperience before vocalizing my criticism of their performance. As a more senior employee, I should be more nurturing by being patient for the betterment of my team and our mission to serve our patients.

**Potential Challenges or Barriers**

Being an ISFJ personality, there are certain traits that I find challenging. One of those traits include being able to share my feelings openly with others. Being an introvert, I like to keep my feelings to myself and sometimes this can cause great conflicts when it comes to dealing with someone is an extrovert who always want to share and talk about their feelings and themselves. Being more self-aware of this, I can use it to mentally prepare myself to more purposefully communicate my opinions of a situation before conflict arises. By better communicating my expectations, I find it helps in minimizing conflicts both professionally and personally. If I know that I would have to attend a work function that would require me to socialize with other coworker and colleagues, I would plan ahead and carefully organize my thoughts about what I would say to other people at the function. I would start by socializing with someone that I feel comfortable with and then work up the courage to speak to more people throughout the function.

Another aspect that has been challenging to me has been my ability to deal with persons that do not share the same sense of responsibility and duty. I find it unacceptable when dealing with a person who does not deliver on what they promise to deliver as it causes inconvenience to myself and other parties if not something more detrimental such as a person’s well-being. When these conflicts arise, it is a challenge for me to work through the issue at hand due to my intolerance of the irresponsibility that created the issue in the first place. Knowing this, I try to communicate to a person how important it is that they deliver on what they initially promise. Again, by communicating expectations prior to an issue arising, I find that I am better able to avoid bad situations.

**Mindfulness Practice**

**Whole Person Goals**

In the near future, I will be a mother for the first time. As such, this has renewed a goal of mine with a greater urgency than ever before. I wish to live a long and happy life so that I may provide for my child and enjoy my family for many years to come. To do this, it is necessary to improve my physical well-being through a healthier lifestyle. Being sedentary and consuming harmful foods lacking good nutrition is detrimental to this goal. As such, I must gradually change my ways by incorporating good habits into my daily life. I tend to watch more television and exercise less than I should. A healthier lifestyle goal that I can implement is to watch 30 minutes less television in exchange for 30 minutes of walking in my neighborhood daily. This will promote better physical habits that I hope to grow by starting small and gradually increasing my activity. The other goal is to improve my nutrition. I plan to give up sugar one day a week. By accomplishing this, I should be able to prove to myself that I can go without sugar. This may lead to two days a week, then three. From here, I hope to reach a point where sugary treats only happen on special occasions. Again, start small and gradually grow the process.

For my vital-rhythmic well-being, I hope to accomplish better sleep and to decrease my stress level through deep breathing exercises. By getting my body proper rest and relieving it of undue stress, I will greatly improve my health. I have two goals to accomplish this. By going to sleep one hour earlier than I usually do at 10 PM, that will help me to get at least six hours of sleep a night. When I feel anxious and stressed in the next 7 days, I will start practicing deep breathing exercises to relieve tension and rid my body of some level of stress. I will take 5 deep cleansing breaths in the morning to start my day and I will do 3 deep cleansing breaths during the day when I feel anxious or stressed. I hope that sleeping and taking deep breath will help improve my mentation during the day so that I can be more focus on my daily task at work or at home.

For my mental and emotional well-being, it is necessary for me to recognize how I feel and clear my mind of thoughts that can cause distractions from what is really important in my life. By writing my feelings in a journal daily, I hope to better analyze where I am at mentally and emotionally. This will allow me to see where I can take action to improve my well-being. To clear my mind of thoughts that are unproductive, I could read books for at least 30 minutes prior to sleeping each night that would encourage positive thinking.

For my spiritual well-being, I feel the need to reference my catholic faith. I have a goal of attending mass regularly every Sunday for the next four weeks as it may offer greater perspective on my life. An additional goal of mine is to pray for at least 5 minutes each night prior to going to sleep. This may help me take better stock of my life and realize how fortunate and blessed I am.

**Achievement of Goals**

I believe that to be able to achieve a wholesome well-being, I need to work on all 4 areas of wellness: physical, vital/rhythmic, mental/emotional, and spiritual. To achieve my goals of physical, vital/rhythmic, mental/emotional, and spiritual well-being, I would need to change the way I think and do things. I need to listen to my body to hear and sense what it is telling me. When I engage in sedentary activities such as watching television all day and snacking on high sugar junk food, I often feel sluggish and tired all day. Being more mindful and attuned with my inner self, I can distinguish that my body is telling me to change my unhealthy lifestyle to promote a better physical well-being. That being said, I will need to work on listening to my body cues and adjust my unhealthy lifestyle to attain my physical well-being goals. Similarly, my vital/rhythmic well-being is very closely linked with my physical body well-being. I need to work on taking care of my physical body by giving it at least 6 hours of rest night and decreasing my stress level throughout the day. Stress can cause a detrimental impact on my body and mind. I need to be mindful of what can bring about stress. When I sense that my body and mind is stressed, I need to take cleansing deep breathe to help clear my mind of distraction and decrease my stress level. By having a method to relieve myself of unwelcome stress through sleeping well and deep breathing exercises, I hope to be more mindful of my own body and my surrounding environment. I believe that my mental and emotional well-being is the most important part of being well. To achieve feeling well mentally and emotionally, I need to change the way I think and feel. I need to focus on the power of positive thinking. Thinking positively can help me feel happier with the ways things are and improve on the things that could be positive changes in my life. Sometimes, things do not go the way you anticipated to go and that is okay. I need to realize that it is things could be worse than what it really is. Hence, reading positive self-help books before going to sleep each night and journaling my thoughts and experience will help me gain a better perspective in life and feel more positively about myself mentally and emotionally. Lastly, my spiritual well-being is as important as my mental and emotional well-being. It is through my spirituality that I will find inner peace with myself and my creator. I feel that believing in something greater than yourself is an important aspect of life. I believe in the power of prayers and how it heals the soul so that the body and the mind can be at peace. My goal to be more spiritual will be accomplished with going to Sunday mass and daily prayers will help me reflect on the blessings that I have in my life. It will make me feel more appreciative of the people that I am blessed to have in my life.

**Healing Environments**

**Optimal Healing Environment in Healthcare**

According to the Samueli Institute (2001-2016), an optimal healing environment is defined as an ideal place where patient’s experience with healing is supported through physical, spiritual, behavioral, and environmental facets. There are 4 domains within the optimal healing environment: internal, interpersonal, behavioral, and external. Together, these 4 domains will provide patients with an environment that would be optimal for healing during their hospital stay. Two examples of optimal healing environment are Ronald Regan UCLA Medical Center in California and John Hopkins Hospital in Maryland.

The 4 domains of internal, interpersonal, behavioral, and external environment could be identified within the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center making it an optimal healing environment. Internally, the Ronald Regan UCLA Medical Center provide patients with a facility that promotes personal wholeness and harmony. Internally, the Ronald Reagan mission and value are to provide patient care with cutting edge evidence-based research and technologies while providing a professional environment where patients feel comfortable and safe during their healing process. They provide harp music services to help relax patients and families when they check in at the lobby. Spiritual assistance in different religious practices are offered at the Mediation room/Chapel to help patient promote spiritual growth while healing. Animal connection services are also available to help promote healing intentions. Patients are offered magazines, puzzles, and comfort kits to help reduce their anxiety from being in the hospital setting. Interpersonally, the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center staff uses the CICARE communication tool to connect with patients, families, and colleagues. The CICARE communication tool that stands for connect, introduce, communicate, ask, respond, and exit. Using CICARE staffs at the medical center is able to provide care that is patient-specific and patient-centered. The medical center also offers family housing assistance through their Tiverton House that is within walking distance to the hospital. Patients can relax knowing that their family is comfortable and close by. Behaviorally, the medical facility offers family centered integrative care. They offer nutrition counseling to support healthy eating lifestyles. Patients have options for personalizing their meals with gluten free and vegetarian options. Externally, the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center is built to endure natural disasters such as earthquakes as high as 8.0 magnitude providing patients with a safe environment during their hospital stay. The medical center also offers a tranquil outdoor garden called the Garden of Peace to provide their patients and patient’s family with a place to walk and enjoy nature. Each patient room are private and has a glass wall that allows natural light to come into the room to increase serenity and promote healing (UCLA Health, Ronald Regan Medical Center, n.d.).

Another example of an optimal healing environment is the John Hopkins Hospital in Maryland. Internally, the John Hopkins Hospital offers patients a place where they could achieve personal wholeness and healing through their holistic approach to care. They offer gardens for meditation and mind-body therapy to help patient cope with their illness and achieve optimal healing. They offer patient education through audio and visual technologies to ease patient anxiety about their illness. Guided-imagery techniques and coping mechanisms are used by staff to help patients achieve wellness. Interpersonally, the hospital offers family lounges to allow family bonding during the patient’s hospitalization. Professional interpreter services are available to help promote social connection between patient and staffs. Behaviorally, the hospital offers customized food service menus with healthy eating options. Kosher meals are also available. Patients can request an individualized weight management consultation with a specialist to help them improve their health. Acupuncture therapy and pet therapy is also available to patients for pain management and comfort. Externally, the John Hopkins Hospital provides a peaceful hospital setting with artworks on the hospital walls. Patient care areas are built with sound absorbing material to optimize a quiet healing environment for the patients. They have a garden for meditation outside and indoor playing area for children to play (The Johns Hopkins University, The Johns Hopkins Hospital, and Johns Hopkins Health System, n.d.).

**Professional Presence Promotion**

I intend to apply the insights that I learned from the optimal healing environment of Ronald Reagan Medical Center and the John Hopkins Hospital by making changes to the patient’s internal, interpersonal, behavioral and external environment. To do this, I would first change the internal environment by talking to the patient about healing intention and ask the patient what healing means to them. I need to understand the patient’s perspective in order to implement a care plan that would promote personal wholeness for the patient. I would suggest the patient to keep journal to express their feelings and thoughts throughout their hospital stay. If the patient is religious, I would set aside time to take the patient to the chapel for spiritual healing. Interpersonally, I would involve the patient’s family to be part of the patient’s care and path to healing. I believe that having a strong support system will help the better cope with their illness and help them get through this tough time. If a patient or family does not speak English well, I would use the interpreter language line to speak with them so that we could better understand one another. Behaviorally, I would educate patients on healthy lifestyle choices involving nutrition and physical activity. I would encourage and help the patient to get out of bed for each meal to promote functional mobility while they are recovering. Additionally, I would request that a dietician come and educate the patient on healthy eating and certain dietary restrictions based on the patient’s doctor recommendation. I would also request that a social worker come and speak to the patient who have questions regarding different programs in the community that would be able to help them financially. Externally, I would open the curtains in the patient’s room the morning to bring in the natural sunlight and decrease the use of bright overhead light. I would encourage the family to bring in family pictures from home to keep at the patient’s bedside. I would suggest the patient tune to the patient channel on the television which offers relaxing music and shows relaxing nature sceneries. I believe my new self-awareness and insights from what I learned of optimal healing environment from other healthcare facilities would help improve my professional presence by enhancing the patient environment to make it a more of a healing environment.

**Conclusion**

Having a mindful professional presence and learning the evolution of the field of nursing will give me the tools I need to better care for my patients and help them heal. After taking the Jung personality test, I have a better idea of my own strengths and weaknesses. This puts me in a better position for the potential challenges that I will face when dealing with people. Additionally, by being more self-aware of my tendencies, I can better analyze how I can improve mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually to become more whole as a person. This will give me the ability to have a better perspective of my patients by being able to relate to them allowing me to better help them with advice on how to heal. I hope to provide my patients with a more healing environment through insights that I have gained from the observation of other healing institutions.

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